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ACTION SS-30

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E.O. 12065: RDS-1 5/22/00 (GLEYSTEN, W.H.) OR-M
TAGS: PINS, PINT, PEPR, KS, US
SUBJECT: MAY 22 MEETING WITH FONMIN

1. (S - ENTIRE TEXT)
2. PLEASE NOTE URGENT ACTION REQUESTED.
3. FONMIN TONG JIN PARK (M-R: PAK TONG-CHIN) ASKED ME TO CALL URGENTLY MAY 22 TO REVIEW WITH ME THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE KWANGJU SITUATION, EMPHASIZE THE GOVERNMENT'S PLANS TO DEAL WITH IT IN A PRUDENT MANNER, AND TO REQUEST THAT WE DO SOMETHING MORE TO WARN THE NORTH KOREANS AGAINST EXPLOITING THE SITUATION.
4. BEFORE RESPONDING TO HIS POINT ABOUT FURTHER WARNINGS, I EXPLAINED THE EXTENT TO WHICH WE WERE FACILITATING ROK ARMY EFFORTS TO RESTORE ORDER IN KWANGJU AND DETER TROUBLE ELSEWHERE. IN ESSENCE, WE HAD DONE EVERYTHING WE REASONABLY COULD. WE HAD NOT AND DID NOT INTEND TO PUBLICIZE OUR ACTIONS BECAUSE WE FEARED WE WOULD BE CHARGED WITH COLLUDING WITH THE MARTIAL LAW AUTHORITIES AND RISK FANNING ANTI-AMERICAN SENTIMENT IN THE KWANGJU AREA. WE HAD ALSO URGED THAT THE KOREAN MILITARY EXERCISE MAXIMUM MODERATION AND PATIENCE. I THEN ENCOURAGED THE FONMIN AS

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A RECENTLY RE-APPOINTED CABINET MEMBER WHO "UNDERSTOOD AMERICANS" TO USE HIS INFLUENCE IN TRYING TO TALK TO THE

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: ☐
ROBERT H. MILLER
DATE/CASE ID: 21 FEB 2001 199604577

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MILITARY LEADERS IN AN ATTEMPT TO STOP THEM FROM MAGNIFYING THEIR PROBLEM. BEFORE MAY 17 WE HAD TOLD THE BLUE HOUSE AND GENERALS THAT FIRMNESS TOWARD THE STUDENTS SHOULD BE COUPLED WITH CONCILIATORY MOVES IN THE POLITICAL AREA. INSTEAD, THEY PROCEEDED WITH THE MAY 17 CRACKDOWN. KWANGJU AND REACTIONS ELSEWHERE HAD SHOWN THE GENERALS TO HAVE BEEN WRONG. YET TODAY THEY REPEATED THE PROCESS BY ISSUING A STATEMENT ATTACKING KIM DAE JUNG (M-R: KIM TAE-CHUNG), RATHER THAN MAKING SOME CONCILIATORY GESTURE OR AT LEAST REMAINING SILENT ABOUT A MAN WHOSE ARREST WAS THE IMMEDIATE PROVOCATION OF THE KWANGJU INSURRECTION. I SAID THAT I WAS REALLY MORE WORRIED AT THIS POINT ABOUT INTERNAL MISCALCULATIONS THAN I WAS ABOUT IMMINENT ATTACK FROM NORTH KOREA. I TOLD PARK I WAS SPEAKING VERY BLUNTLY TO HIM AND THAT HE COULD QUOTE ME AS HE SAW FIT. HE AGREED WITH ME BUT LAMENTED THE LACK OF ANYONE AROUND WITH THE STATURE TO TALK SENSE TO THE GENERALS.

5. AS FOR THE REQUEST FOR A FURTHER WARNING TO THE NORTH KOREANS, I SAID THAT WE HAD MADE A STRONG STATEMENT WHICH I WAS SURE HAD BEEN READ CAREFULLY IN PYONGYANG. NEVERTHELESS, I WAS PREPARED TO RECOMMEND THAT THIS BE REITERATED. IN ADDITION, U TOLD HIM THAT I WAS RECOMMENDING TO WASHINGTON THAT WE PARALLEL OUR PUBLIC WARNING WITH URGENT DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIONS IN BEIJING AND MOSCOW. I HAD NOT THOUGHT THESE NECESSARY EARLIER, BUT HAD CHANGED MY MIND AS A RESULT OF THE VASTLY INCREASED DANGER IN KWANGJU. FINALLY, I SAID THAT I WAS ALSO PREPARED TO URGE A WASHINGTON STATEMENT SPECIFICALLY DIRECTED AT THE CITIZENS OF KWANGJU IF WE HAD ADVANCE ASSURANCE THAT THE MARTIAL LAW AUTHORITIES WOULD SEE THAT IT WAS DISTRIBUTED

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IN ITS ENTIRETY. PARK WAS INTERESTED IN THIS IDEA AND SAID HE WOULD BE BACK IN TOUCH. WE HAVE MADE THE SAME POINT THROUGH MILITARY CHANNELS.

6. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT THE DEPARTMENT URGENTLY CONTACT THE PRC AND USSR TO REITERATE PRIVATELY TO THEM THE WARNING CONTAINED IN OUR STATEMENT OF MAY 18 AND TO URGE THAT THEY BRING THIS TO THE ATTENTION OF THE DPRK. GLEYSTEN

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